



NORTH KOREA



INTRODUCTION

An independent kingdom for much of its history, following World War II, Korea was split with the northern half coming under Soviet-sponsored communist control. North Korea, under its founder President KIM Il Sung, adopted a policy of diplomatic and economic "self-reliance" as a check against outside influence. KIM Jong Il, was officially designated as his father's successor in 1980, followed in 2011 by current leader KIM Jong Un.

GOVERNMENT

Chief of State

Supreme People's Assembly President CHOE Ryong Hae

Head of Government

State Affairs Commission Chairman KIM Jong Un

Government Type

dictatorship, single-party state; official state ideology of "Juche" or "national self-reliance"

Capital

Pyongyang

Legislature

unicameral Supreme People's Assembly or Ch'oego Inmin Hoeui (687 seats)

GEOGRAPHY

Area

Total: 120,538 sq km
Land: 120,408 sq km
Water: 130 sq km

Climate

temperate, with rainfall concentrated in summer; long, bitter winters

Natural Resources

coal, iron ore, limestone, magnesite, graphite, copper, zinc, lead, precious metals, hydropower

as of October 2021

ECONOMY

Economic Overview

one of the last centrally planned economies; hard hit by COVID-19, crop failures, international sanctions, and isolationist policies; declining growth and trade, and heavily reliant on China; poor exchange rate stability; economic data integrity issues

GDP (Purchasing Power Parity) \$40 billion (2015 est.)

GDP per capita (Purchasing Power Parity) \$1,700 (2015 est.)

Industries - military products, machine building, electric power, chemicals, mining (coal, iron ore, limestone, magnesite, graphite, copper, zinc, lead, precious metals), metallurgy, textiles, food processing, tourism

Agricultural products - rice, maize, vegetables, apples, potatoes, cabbages, fruit, sweet potatoes, beans, soybeans

Exports \$222 million (2018 est.)

watch components, fake hair, iron alloys, instructional models, tungsten (2019)

partners: China 67%, Suriname 6% (2019)

Imports \$2.32 billion (2018 est.)

clothing, apparel, soybean oil, rice, wheat products, clocks/watches (2019)

partners: China 96% (2019)

PEOPLE & SOCIETY

Population

25.8 million (July 2021 est.)

Population Growth

0.49% (2021 est.)

Ethnicity

racially homogeneous; there is a small Chinese community and a few ethnic Japanese

Language

Korean

Religion

traditionally Buddhist and Confucianist, some Christian and syncretic Chondogyo (Religion of the Heavenly Way)

Urbanization

urban population: 62.6% of total population (2021)

rate of urbanization: 0.85% annual rate of change (2020-25 est.)

